

Council on Postsecondary Education Committee on Equal Opportunities

Status: Diversity Plan Development

Charge:

The CPE adopted an action plan for the development of a statewide diversity plan January 16, 2009. The action plan asked the CEO and a CPE/institutional collaborative workgroup to work with constituents across the commonwealth to draft a diversity plan. Special consideration was given the conference of presidents, the institution legal counsels, and others to provide active input and guidance for plan development.

The committee, in collaboration with colleges and universities, is to recommend policies or changes in policy to ensure that Kentucky complies with the standards articulated by the Supreme Court in the Michigan cases *Grutter* and *Gratz*, Kentucky law, and federal law.

Status:

Plan facilitation: To facilitate plan development the CEO has established three formal workgroups. Two workgroups are chaired by CEO members. The work groups report to the CEO at regular meetings, as well as provide status reports to the CPE. The legal workgroup focuses on constitutional principles of developing the Diversity Plan to ensure that the basic plan framework is within appropriate legal parameters. Members of the legal group include: Lisa Osborne (CHAIR), John Johnson, Wendell Thomas, David Welch, Abraham Williams, and Phyllis Maclin.

The plan and policy workgroup focuses on policy issues of a Diversity Plan. The policy group collaborates with institutional representatives, constituent groups, and others to receive input for planning. Members of the plan and policy group include: Charles Whitehead (CHAIR), Jerome Bowles, Chris Crumrine, Raoul Cunningham, Carl Rollins, Joe Weis, and Phyllis Maclin.

The third group is the CPE staff/Institutional work group. Their responsibility is to act as primary drafters a statewide plan and to present the information to the constituent groups, CEO, and conference of presidents for comment. This group is comprised of institutional representatives identified by the president of each respective institution to provide input for each institution. Members of the workgroup are: Sandra D. Moore, Eastern Kentucky University, Gwen Joseph, Kentucky Community and Technical College, Kimberly Holmes, Kentucky State University, Charles Holloway, Morehead State University, Sabrina Dial, Murray State University, Willie Elliot, Northern Kentucky University, Terry Allen, University of Kentucky, Mordean Taylor- Archer, University of Louisville, Richard Miller, Western Kentucky University, Rana Johnson, Council on Postsecondary Education, and Sherron Jackson, Council on Postsecondary Education.

Also, the conference of presidents established a sub-committee to provide guidance to the Committee on Equal Opportunities regarding the development of a statewide plan. The

conference of president's subcommittee has provided formal input to CEO on four occasions December, 2008, January 2009, March 2009, and May 2009.

Activities: The CPE staff/institutional representative workgroup meet bi-weekly to address issues related to drafting a statewide plan. The CEO policy workgroup meets bi-monthly or as needed to receive information from constituents or the staff/institutional representative workgroup and to provide guidance regarding plan development. The legal workgroup provide input and guidance on the crafting of section of the plan as needed.

Completed Plan Sections: The CPE staff/institutional representative workgroup has completed several sections of the statewide plan which were submitted to the Conference of Presidents, the CEO legal group, CEO policy Group, the CEO, and the CPE for review and comment. The sections completed are mission, vision, core values, and definition of diversity. Each section is outlined below:

Mission:

Diversity and opportunity are core values of higher education. The concept of diversity in Kentucky has broadened immensely in recent decades as demographics changed. Although the inclusive definition goes beyond race, the Kentucky Public Postsecondary Education Diversity Plan must continue to emphasize the focus on African Americans. To this end, the Commonwealth of Kentucky charges the Committee on Equal Opportunities with monitoring Kentucky Public Postsecondary Education Diversity Plan implementation and equal opportunity regulations at postsecondary education institutions.

Vision:

Postsecondary education, through its institutions, will enhance the Commonwealth by embracing, valuing, respecting, and promoting diversity and educational excellence to increase economic viability and social inclusion.

Core Values:

Valuing a diverse student body, faculty, staff, administrators, and citizenry is a vital principle in the education and economic development environment of the Commonwealth. The following values shape the priorities and guide decisions in fulfilling the Commonwealth's vision of diversity.

- Value diversity as a vital component in the state's educational and economic development.
- Continue to focus on access and equal opportunity for African Americans and underserved groups that have experienced historical patterns of discrimination and exclusion.
- Respect personal uniqueness and differences.
- Encourage intellectual and creative freedom.
- Challenge stereotypes and promote awareness and inclusion.
- Prepare students to live and work in a diverse global society.
- Promote access and high expectations and support student success.
- Support community engagement, civic responsibility, and service that advance diverse and underserved population groups.

- Implement assessment and accountability measures that document the progress and outcomes of diversity efforts.
- Foster a campus climate that supports collegiality, collaboration, and civility.

Definition:

Diversity, for purposes of this plan, is an essential characteristic in building an inclusive community of people with varied human differences and world views that honor and respect those differences in a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment for living, learning, and working.

The major elements of the statewide plan are introduction, background and history, mission, vision, core beliefs and values, definition of diversity, plan oversight, objectives, plan review and revisions. Several sections are finished but the workgroup has suspended work on the remaining portion of the plan until insight and guidance can be provided with regard to the major policy area of developmental education.

Constituent groups: A number of constituent groups were invited to offer discussion and recommendations for development of a statewide diversity plan. The groups invited include: Former members of the CEO and CPE, the Kentucky Long-Term Policy Research Center, the Kentucky State Data Center, Educating Latinos for Kentucky's Future (ELKF), Governor's Office For Minority Empowerment, Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) Division of Educator, Quality, and Diversity, Kentucky Association of Blacks in Higher Education, University of Kentucky Black Graduate and Professional Student Association, the statewide student government group, State Conference of NAACP, and the Human Rights Commission.

Training: The workgroup received training with regard to workforce utilization analysis for purposes of establishing affirmative action objectives from staff at University of Louisville and KCTCS. Information was presented relative to the use of Affirmative Action Utilization analyses (OFCCP) to establish realistic/reliable diversity plan objectives.

What are the next steps?

- Continue to receive input from collaborators and other constituent groups
- Report final draft of working definitions to CEO/CPE
- Report first draft of objectives and implementation strategies to CEO/CPE fall 2009
- Report first draft diversity plan to CEO/CPE fall/winter 2009
- Report final draft of the diversity plan to CEO/CPE January/February 2010
- Submit diversity plan recommendations to CPE March 2010